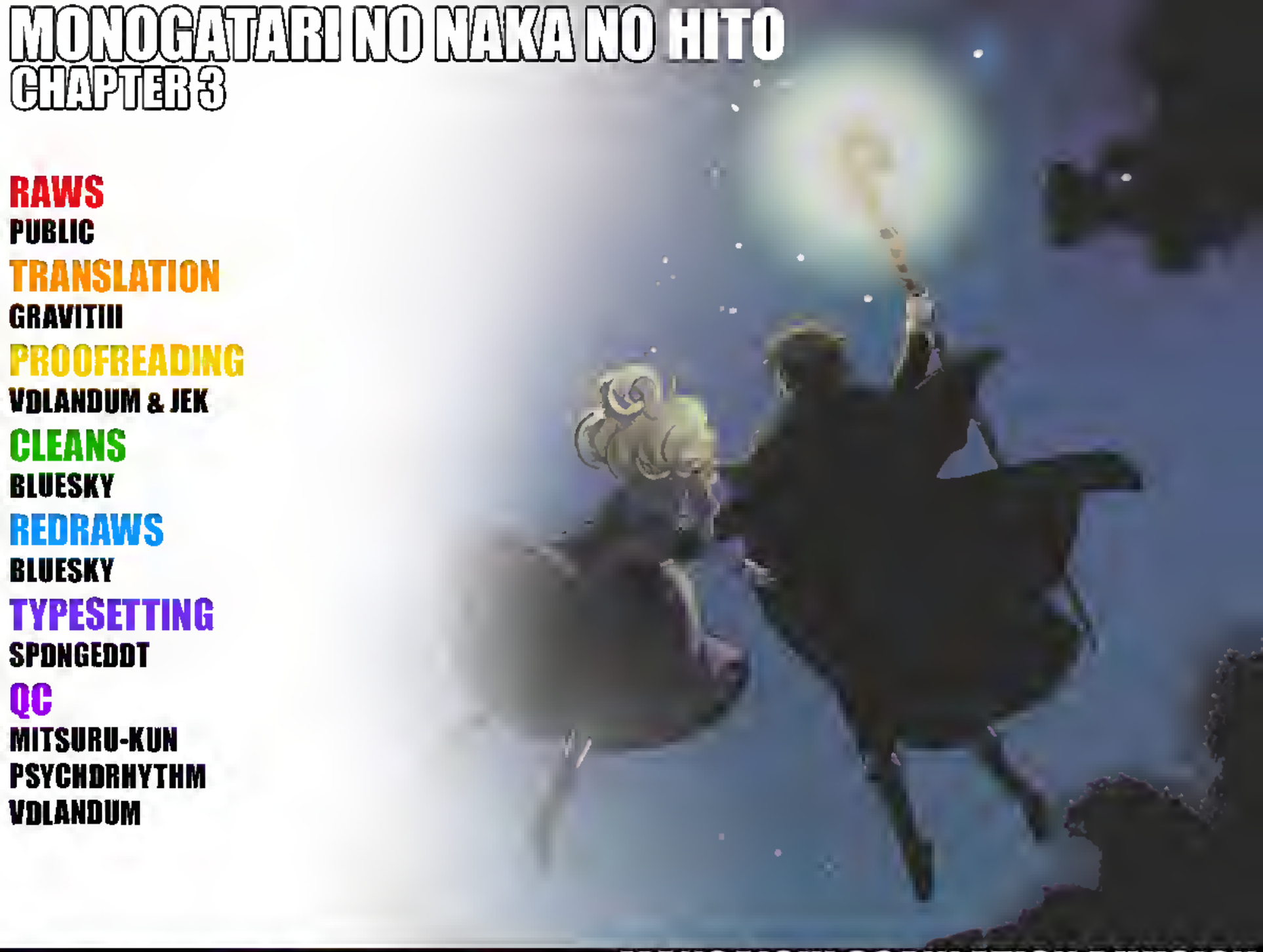
MONOGATARI NO NAKA NO HITO
CHAPTER 3



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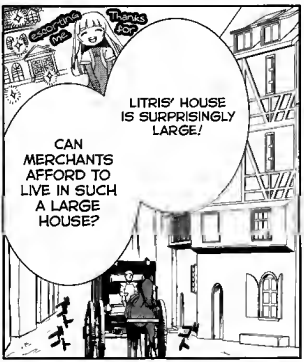
RELEASE #320 | JUL 30, 2017

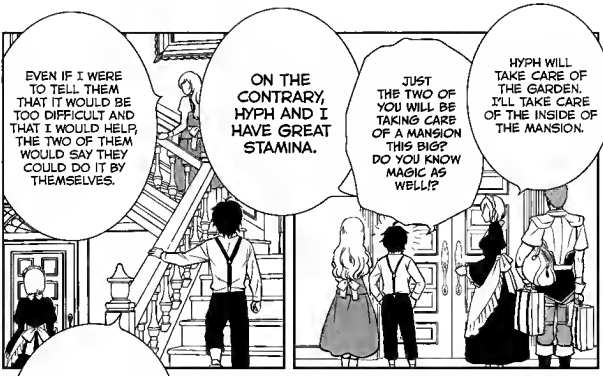
AFTER ALL, LITRIS' FAMILY ARE FAMOUS MERCHANTS IN THE KINGDOM!


Thanks for escorting me.
LITRIS' HOUSE IS SURPRISINGLY LARGE!
CAN MERCHANTS AFFORD TO LIVE IN SUCH A LARGE HOUSE?

IN SUCH A CITY, HAVING LARGE HOUSES IS TRULY IMPRESSIVE...
IN THE PAST, IF MERCHANTS OR VILLAGERS MOVED INTO SUCH A LARGE HOUSE
THEY'D BE DESPISED BY THEIR BETTERS. THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT EMPHASIS ON CLASS.

NEVER MIND.
IN THE PAST?
THAT REMINDS ME, WE'LL BE CLASSMATES SOON. SUCH RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE ISN'T VERY SUITABLE.
YES... THEN I WON'T CALL YOU RIHEED-SAN ANY MORE...
RIHEED.
.....

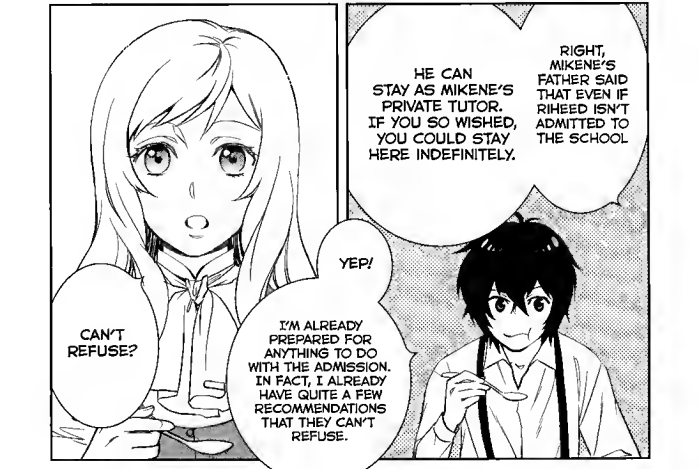
YOU... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
WHAT... WHAT IS IT, ARYU?
STARE...
OH... I WAS THINKING YOU GUYS GET ALONG PRETTY WELL.
...WE'VE ARRIVED AT THE MIKARUNE MANSION IN THE CAPITAL.
THIS PLACE IS SO EXTRAVAGANT!


EVEN IF I WERE TO TELL THEM THAT IT WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT AND THAT I WOULD HELP, THE TWO OF THEM WOULD SAY THEY COULD DO IT BY THEMSELVES.
ON THE CONTRARY, HYPH AND I HAVE GREAT STAMINA.
JUST THE TWO OF YOU WILL BE TAKING CARE OF A MANSION THIS BIG? DO YOU KNOW MAGIC AS WELL!?
HYPH WILL TAKE CARE OF THE GARDEN. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE INSIDE OF THE MANSION.

HOWEVER, LIVING WITH SOME KIND PEOPLE IS RATHER NICE.
OOH!
You can use this room.

FROM NOWADAYS, IT'LL BE THE FOUR OF US.
HERE, WITH THREE PEOPLE AROUND THE TABLE IT MAKES ME MUCH HAPPIER.
AT THE OLD MANSION, SERVANTS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO EAT AT THE SAME TABLE.

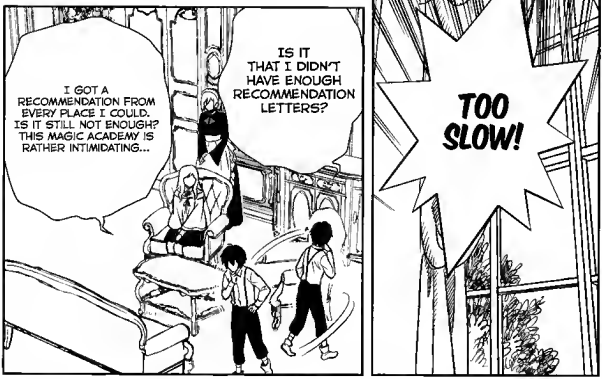
MMM.
FEELS PRETTY GOOD.
EATING WITH FRIENDS.


CAN'T REFUSE?
YEP!
I'M ALREADY PREPARED FOR ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE ADMISSION. IN FACT, I ALREADY HAVE QUITE A FEW RECOMMENDATIONS THAT THEY CAN'T REFUSE.
HE CAN STAY AS MIKENE'S PRIVATE TUTOR. IF YOU SO WISHED, YOU COULD STAY HERE INDEFINITELY.
RIGHT, MIKENE'S FATHER SAID THAT EVEN IF RIHEED ISN'T ADMITTED TO THE SCHOOL

THE SECOND DAY
IS THIS REAL!?
YEP. I STILL HAVE SOME CONNECTIONS FROM LONG AGO THAT CAN HELP.

THIS MUST BE A JOKE!
HOW CAN A CHILD WITH NO NAME HAVE LINKS WITH THESE IMPORTANT PEOPLE?
PROFESSOR KYRIE, YOUR MOTHER WAS BORN IN THE QUEEN'S FOREST.
HOW DO YOU SEE THIS SITUATION?
WHAT ABOUT THE PERSON WHO BROUGHT THESE HERE?
WE HAD HIM WAIT WITH MISS MIKENE'S GUARDIAN IN THE CLASSROOM.

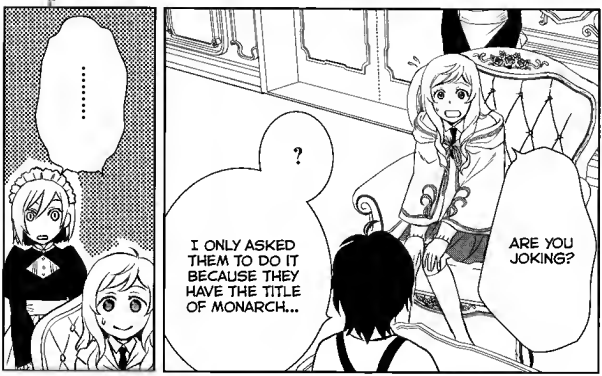
IF IT'S LEGITIMATE, NOT LETTING HIM ATTEND OUR ACADEMY WILL BE A HUGE MISTAKE!
BUT IF IT'S FAKE, OUR SCHOOL'S REPUTATION WILL FALL.
PRINCIPAL, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS SITUATION?
WITHOUT ACTUALLY TALKING TO THE QUEEN, I CAN'T DETERMINE ITS AUTHENTICITY.
HOWEVER, I CAN FEEL TRACES OF THE QUEEN'S MAGIC IN THIS LETTER.

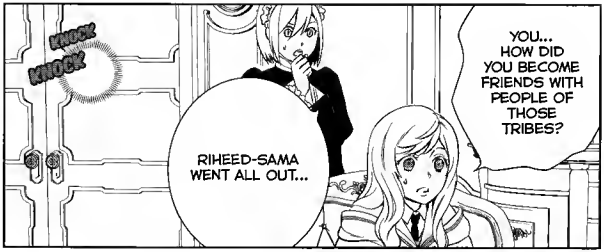

I GOT A RECOMMENDATION FROM EVERY PLACE I COULD. IS IT STILL NOT ENOUGH? THIS MAGIC ACADEMY IS RATHER INTIMIDATING...
IS IT THAT I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH RECOMMENDATION LETTERS?
TOO SLOW!

RIGHT, RIHEED. WHO WROTE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOU?
THAT... YOU SAID FROM EVERY PLACE...

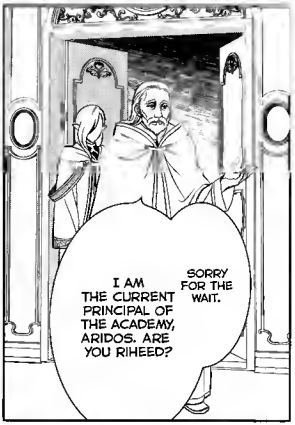
AH-HA.

THE QUEEN OF THE FOREST FOLK
THE DEMON LORD
THE KING OF THE SPIRITS
AND THE KING OF THE DRAGON TRIBE
Huh?
HUH!?


ARE YOU JOKING?
?
I ONLY ASKED THEM TO DO IT BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE TITLE OF MONARCH...
.....


KNOCK
KNOCK
RIHEED-SAMA WENT ALL OUT...
YOU... HOW DID YOU BECOME FRIENDS WITH PEOPLE OF THOSE TRIBES?

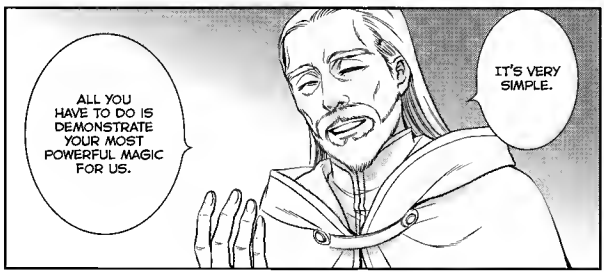
YEP!! I CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER! DID YOU GUYS ADMIT ME YET?


SORRY FOR THE WAIT.
I AM THE CURRENT PRINCIPAL OF THE ACADEMY, ARIDOS. ARE YOU RIHEED?

AHA... WELL.

TO CONFIRM THE DEMON LORD'S LETTER IS RATHER TROUBLESOME.
WE HAVE NO WAY OF CONFIRMING THE DRAGON KING'S RECOMMENDATION.
THE KING OF THE SPIRITS WROTE IN SPIRIT LANGUAGE SO DECIPHERING IT WILL TAKE A WHILE.

DISAPPOINTED
...THEN MY ACCEPTANCE ...
... HOWEVER,
ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO WAY TO VALIDATE MOST OF THEM WE WILL NOT ASSUME THEY WERE FORGED.
THUS, WE'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE A QUICK TEST.
A TEST?


IT'S VERY SIMPLE.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS DEMONSTRATE YOUR MOST POWERFUL MAGIC FOR US.

THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO DO? I'M GOING TO USE ALL MY POWER!
YEP, NO PROBLEM.
LET'S HAVE PRACTICE ARENA ONE BE THE TEST SITE.
THIS BOY WHO HAS CONNECTIONS TO THE QUEEN OF THE FOREST... HOW WILL HE PASS THIS TEST?
BECAUSE THERE'S NO RIGID RUBRIC FOR ENTRANCE, THE SCHOOL BOARD CAN DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHETHER TO ADMIT HIM OR NOT.
EVEN IF HIS MAGIC POWER IS UNDENIABLE THE SCHOOL BOARD CAN STILL REFUSE HIM FOR NO REASON AT ALL.
ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS SIMPLE, IT'S SET TO BE DIFFICULT.

WHAT TYPE OF MAGIC SHOULD I SHOW THEM?
IT HAS TO BE AN INCREDIBLY BOLD MAGIC, LEAVING THEIR MOUTHS GAPING!
THIS IS PRACTICE ARENA ONE.
OH! THERE'S A BARRIER SURROUNDING IT.
SO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE BARRIER. THEN YOU'LL KNOW THAT WHATEVER MAGIC YOU USE IN HERE WON'T AFFECT THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

POOF
THEN LET'S BEGIN!
HE JUST SUMMONED A STAFF OUT OF THIN AIR! WHAT KIND OF MAGIC IS THAT.....!
THAT'S ANCIENT MAGIC...! IF HE CAN DO THAT, NO ONE WILL OBJECT TO LETTING HIM IN!
QUIET! HE'S STILL CHANTING!
ANCIENT MAGIC
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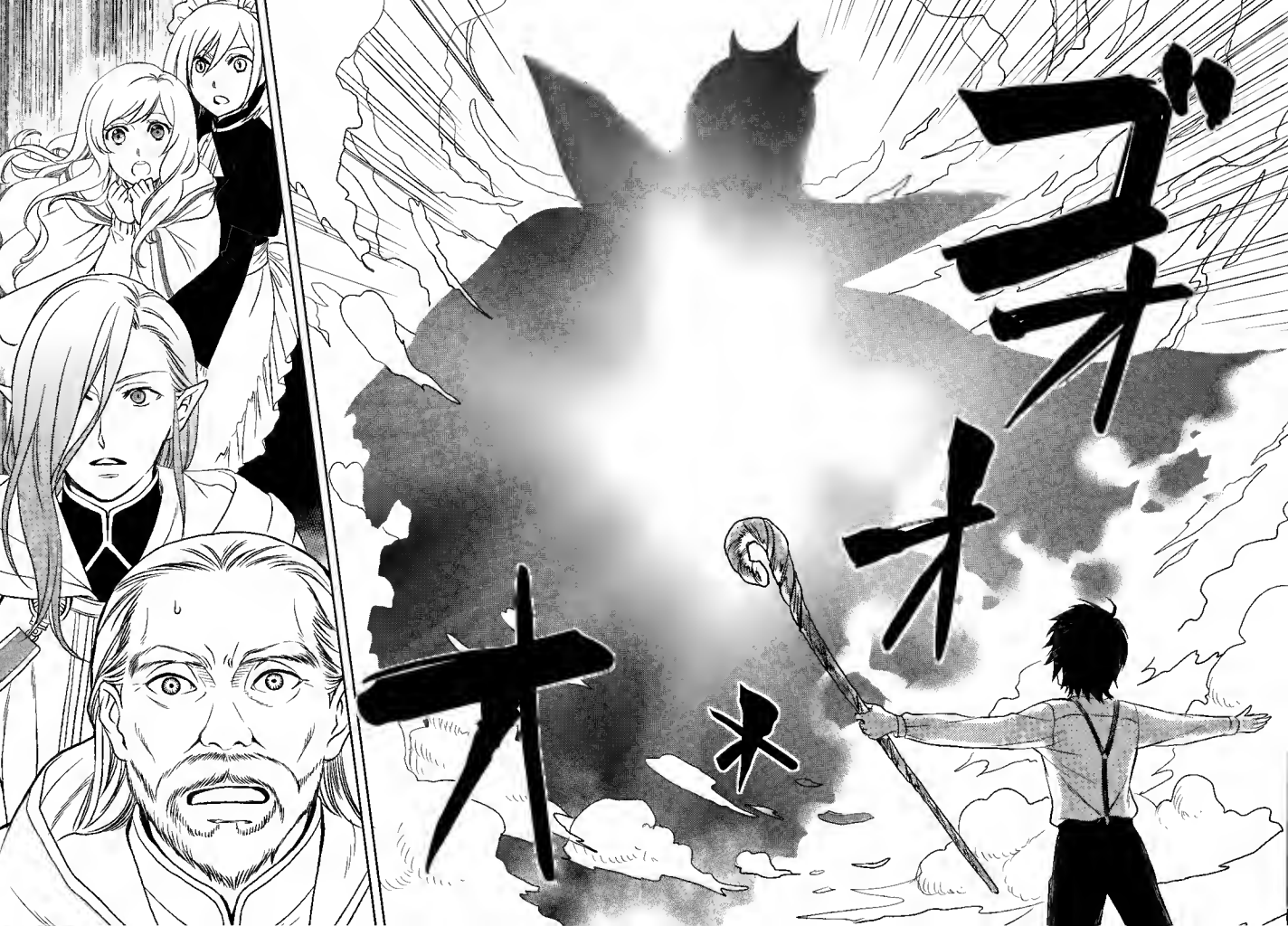
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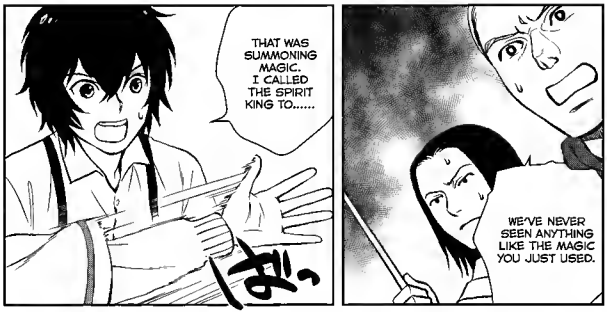
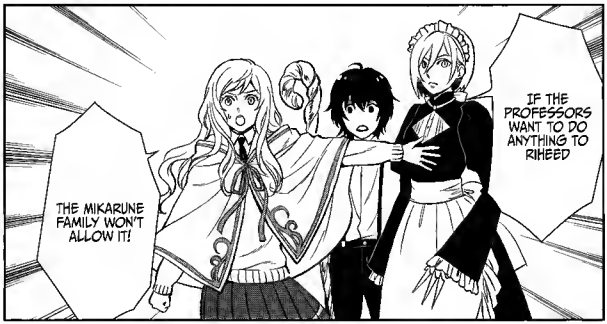
So amazed they're speechless.
I'M IN AN EXAM RIGHT NOW.
I KNOW THAT IT'S SUPER OVERBOARD THAT I SUMMONED YOU,
BUT THEY JUST THINK THAT YOU'RE SOME GLOWING OBJECT.
NOD
NOD
CAN YOU DO SOMETHING?
WHAT? YOU'RE ASKING HOW MUCH YOU MAY DESTROY?
DON'T DESTROY ANYTHING! IF YOU DO, I WON'T GET ACCEPTED.

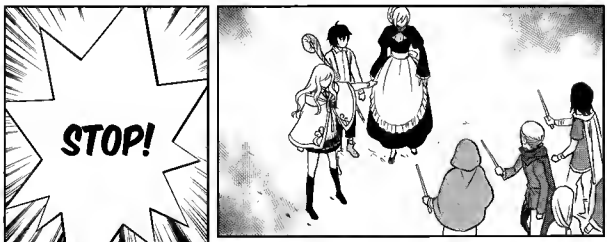
RIGHT! HOW ABOUT THAT!
THE THING YOU DID FOR THE ANCIENT GODS!
THE 18TH PARTY TRICK! I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU!

THE BARRIER WAS BROKEN!
HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE! OUR SCHOOL'S MAGIC BARRIER WAS BROKEN...
THESE LIGHTS ARE SO WARM...

!
HOW'S THAT! ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL?
WHAT WAS THAT LIGHT JUST NOW?!
HEY! I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!


THAT WAS SUMMONING MAGIC. I CALLED THE SPIRIT KING TO.....
WE'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THE MAGIC YOU JUST USED.


IF THE PROFESSORS WANT TO DO ANYTHING TO RIHEED
THE MIKARUNE FAMILY WON'T ALLOW IT!


STOP!

HEAD-MASTER...
THIS YOUNG MAN WAS ONLY TAKING THE TEST.
AND BECAUSE HE DESTROYED THE BARRIER YOU BECAME DEFENSIVE.
Pat
WHAT IMPRESSIVE MAGICAL TALENT.
LET US WELCOME RIHEED-SAN AS A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT FOR A TERM.
O...

NOTHING, I'LL BE UNDER YOUR CARE.
WHAT IS IT?
TALENT... HUH.
MAYBE IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE GLIMMERING LIGHTS?
FOR SOME REASON, THE HARVESTS WERE MORE BOUNTIFUL THAN EVER FOR THE WHOLE YEAR.
THIS IS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED A BIT AFTERWARDS.
AND SO, RIHEED ENTERED THE MAGIC ACADEMY.

to be continued